

Detection and Eradication Program for the Cactus Moth, *Cactoblastis cactorum* (Berg) in Isla Mujeres, Quintana Roo, Mexico.

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The first detection of the cactus moth in Isla Mujeres, in the state of Quintana Roo, Mexico was made on the 31st of July, 2006. The National Phytosanitary Reference Center, which is part of SENASICA confirmed the taxonomic identity of the samples.

The Mexican Federal Government immediately released the necessary funds to implement an Eradication Program against cactus moth in the Mexican territory. Four million one hundred and twenty three thousand pesos have been expended to date. The operational program is managed by the Comité Estatal de Sanidad Vegetal de Quintana Roo, an organization of agricultural producers managed by SENASICA.

The eradication program initiated actions against the infestation in consultation with technical experts from USDA and IAEA. Actions included total elimination of host plants on Isla Mujeres, deployment of a trapping grid to detect the presence of adult males and an aggressive outreach and information campaign to raise awareness of the problem to citizens. Training of technical personnel in Mexico was also stepped-up with the assistance of international experts.

As a result of these actions, populations of cactus moth have decreased dramatically, from an initial detection and removal of 4,126 egg-sticks from August 2006 to early March 2007, no additional egg-sticks have been found since 11 March 2007. Three hundred and twenty one adults were captured in traps since the inception of the program, but no additional adults have been captured from 25 February onward, even though trap density in the area was increased in recent months.

In addition, the program is conducting surveillance activities in nearby areas including the city of Cancun and the National Park on Isla Contoy.